



*SONrise*

*May - June*

*2004*

**EMMAUS**

**NEWSLETTER**

**... Strengthening the Local Church**

Last summer, Carolyn and I were able to visit Germany, Austria and Italy on vacation. Rome was at the end of the trip and we knew we would be saturated with the Arts those last 2 days. One of the masterpieces we got to see was Michelangelo's Pietá (pee-ay-TAH), which literally means "sorrow" and is the title used for any artist's interpretation of Jesus, the Man of Sorrows, usually after death, and often just after being removed from the cross. Michelangelo's sculpture is especially interesting because he portrays Mary holding her dead son draped across her lap, but Mary is shown youthful and not having to strain in supporting a full-grown man... almost as if she's just holding her baby and imagining his future. Michelangelo carved his Pietá at only 25. He overheard some observers debating what other sculptor of the day might have made the work, snuck in that night and carved his name on the sash that goes over Mary's left shoulder. He wanted to autograph his to-be-famous work so everyone would know who did it. After regretting his vain action, he never signed another of his pieces.



Upon returning home, the following week I was reading in Max Lucado's Grace for the Moment daily devotion for July 13 and he talked about having a football that had been signed by several pro football quarterbacks. The football itself was not valuable, perhaps just coming from Wal-Mart. It was the signatures that may it significant. Max notes that there's nothing outstandingly special about us, "*Homo sapiens* are not unique. What makes us special is... the signature of God on our lives." Max begins his devotional with how we are "a gift to the world,... signed by God". When reading this I was instantly reminded of Michelangelo's signing of one of his great works that I had seen just the week before, because he just wanted people to know who created it. Isn't that what God wants too? To be recognized as our "creator"?

Think about your life for a moment. Is there anything you do in the world, with the world, or for the world, that is greater than the "good news" you carry? As Christians, we have God's signature. Do we show it for all to see? Or, do people have to wonder whose signature we carry? Is it obvious to those around us as we go about our day-to-day activities? The world runs constantly trying to get ahead, to be successful, to be noticed and valued. But we're all alike in body, coming from the great Wal-Mart of the sky (where atoms and molecules can be had in bulk). It's the signature on us that makes us valuable. Really valuable. Lastingly valuable.

Remember the important thing: It's not *who we are*, but rather *whose we are*. Does God's signature show on us for all to see?

Steve Rochelle  
Community Lay Director 2004.

"He anointed us, set *his seal of ownership* on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor 2:22